



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Lebanon Situation Report

January 2023

Population | **6.8 million**
2019 Human Development Index | **92 out of 189**
Income Level (World Bank) | **Lower-middle**
2021 GNI CAPITA (US\$) | **3,450**

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Lebanon is entering its fourth year of a severe economic, political, and social crisis while also hosting the largest number of refugees per capita in the world. Record-high global food and fuel prices have added to the country's already dire situation.

These crises have led to high levels of poverty and food insecurity amongst both Lebanese and refugee communities. The first integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) for Lebanon in September 2022 found that 1.29 million Lebanese and 700,000 Syrian refugees – 37 percent of the total population – are facing acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3, *Crisis*, and Phase 4, *Emergency*). As the economic crisis continues to worsen, and food prices increase, food insecurity is expected to affect 1.46 million Lebanese and 800,000 Syrian refugees (42 percent of the total population) by April 2023.

Basic living conditions are in continuous decline. The 2022 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees found that 90 percent of Syrian refugee families were in need of humanitarian assistance to survive, with the most basic needs out of reach due to inflation. Based on WFP's Household Deprivation Score, 60 percent of the Lebanese population was multi-dimensionally deprived in August 2022, up from 53 percent in December 2021.

WFP is at the forefront of the response to Lebanon's economic and refugee crisis, which supported 2 million of the most vulnerable Lebanese and refugees in 2022 to meet their food and other essential needs. WFP is maintaining its assistance to vulnerable communities in 2023, targeting 2.4 million people.

IN NUMBERS

3.5 M
people in need of assistance

1.5 M
people assisted in January 2023

\$18 M
cash-based Transfers made

3,365 MT
of food distributed

SITUATION UPDATE

The price of the food Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) reached LBP 1.2 million in December, up from LBP 1.1 million in November. The full SMEB (food and other essential needs) for a family of five reached LBP 12.5 million in December, a 12 percent increase from the previous month. Detailed market updates based on WFP's assessments are available here: [WFP Lebanon Market Monitor - January 2023](#).

Lebanon's Central Bank devalued the official exchange rate to LBP 15,000 to the dollar, replacing the decades-long rate of LBP 1,500/USD. While regarded as a step towards unifying the country's multiple exchange rates, the value of the market rate remains notably lower, surpassing LBP 60,000/USD in January. The new official exchange rate is expected to further drive inflation, particularly on electricity and imported goods.

Monthly inflation in December was 6.7 percent with food inflation contributing to 38 percent of the increase in December, up from an 18 percent contribution in November (Consumer Price Index data from the Central Administration of Statistics). Further price hikes on food and other essential needs are expected for February, following continued currency depreciation.

The impact of earthquakes that hit Türkiye and Syria on 6 February was felt across Lebanon, but no casualties or major material damage were recorded. WFP operations and staff in Lebanon were unaffected.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

	% Funded	Available	Required
COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (2023-2025)	8%	\$443million	\$5.3billion
2023 TOTAL REQUIREMENTS	25%	\$443million	\$1.8billion

Net Funding Requirements (Feb – Jul 2023)
US\$ 443 million



WFP RESPONSE

Cash Assistance for Refugees

In January, WFP provided unconditional cash assistance to 855,000 refugees through 3 modalities:

- **Multipurpose Cash** for food and other essential needs redeemable at ATMs or money transfer agents: 145,000 Syrian refugees
- **Food e-cards** for food needs redeemable at WFP-contracted shops: 372,000 Syrian refugees
- **Cash-for-Food** for food needs redeemable at ATMs, money transfer agents, or shops: 330,000 Syrian refugees and 8,000 refugees of other nationalities.

WFP and UNHCR undertook joint outreach to increase transfer values in December. Following discussions with the Ministry of Social Affairs, in February, WFP increased the transfer value of cash assistance for refugees from LBP 500,000 to LBP 800,000 per person per month for food, and from LBP 1 million to LBP 1.6 million per family per month for other essential needs. This increase will support beneficiaries in better meeting their food and basic needs amid inflation.

WFP and UNHCR have selected 13,5000 Syrian families to receive monthly cash payments from UNHCR starting in February 2023, following the review of 110,000 claims for inclusion for assistance submitted through the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). An additional 1,000 families were selected to receive multipurpose cash assistance from WFP.

Economic Crisis Response for Lebanese

WFP supported 290,000 vulnerable Lebanese individuals (76,000 households) with food parcels in January as part of its response to the economic crisis. A new parcel composition was introduced in January, optimizing nutritional value for families assisted as well as reducing supply chain costs.

School Meals

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) hosted a school feeding event in January. The event highlighted school feeding programmes as an essential social assistance component, supporting MEHE's 5-year national education plan. The plan aims to provide equitable access to quality education opportunities for all children and youth in Lebanon.

Support to Social Protection Programmes

In January, WFP assisted 356,000 Lebanese individuals (64,000 families) through the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP). WFP and staff of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) will resume household visits in March for 17,000 Lebanese families to determine their eligibility for inclusion in the NPTP and complete the scale-up target of 75,000 families.

Livelihoods

WFP engaged 50 Syrian and Lebanese participants (benefitting 200 people) in livelihoods activities ranging from trainings on farming and food processing, forest management and reforestation, and construction of irrigation canals and agricultural roads.

WFP launched the third cycle of call for proposals for the Food System Challenge to select 10–12 small businesses in the agri-food sector to receive a support package to help overcome challenges related to access to inputs and energy and encourage import substitution.

Supply Chain & Retail

WFP is conducting a wheat value chain study in coordination with the World Bank, FAO, and the Ministry of Agriculture. The study will provide insights into the capacity, feasibility, and acceptability of wheat flour fortification on a national level.



GENDER, PROTECTION & ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS (AAP)

WFP received 68,000 claims in January through its call centre: 61 percent from refugees and 39 percent from Lebanese. 44 percent of the claimants requested information on GRM results, 36 percent requested other types of information, 12 percent expressed concerns mostly around challenges with validation related to strikes and closure of validation sites in January, and 6 percent requested to update their personal data. The 2 percent of claims related to protection were referred to relevant agencies for their follow-up. Nearly all (97 percent) of claims were resolved during the same month and the remaining will be closed in February following action from WFP.

MONITORING & ASSESSMENTS

A sharp increase in the waiting time at the ATMs was reported by Syrian refugees in January 2023 as compared to previous months. People reported waiting on average 54 minutes at an ATM in January 2023 compared to 31 minutes in December 2022. People also had to wait longer to redeem at money transfer agents in January (35 minutes compared to 22 minutes in December).

People receiving NPTP assistance also reported longer waiting times at the ATM in January 2023 (42 minutes compared to 26 minutes in December 2022).

Higher waiting times to redeem cash assistance in January is likely due to an increased number of people seeking to redeem cash at ATMs through UNHCR's winter assistance programme. Adjustments to Circular 161 and the Sayrafa rate also led to increased transactions at banks and ATMs. This in turn led to delays in replenishment of bills in the ATMs, resulting in long queues and tensions between ATM users.

KEY CHALLENGES

Lebanon's public education sector continues to face challenges caused by the economic crisis. Since late 2020, teachers have gone on strike multiple times for higher wages and improved working conditions. For the 2022/2023 school year, only 46 of the required 120 school days have taken place so far. WFP's school feeding activities did not take place in January as schools were closed due to a teachers' strike.

Diversification of redemption points (e.g., installing more ATMs and including money transfer agents) and increased monitoring and crowd control helped to reduce travel time and cost for people to redeem cash assistance in 2022. Despite mitigation measures, redemption remains a challenge due to continued depreciation of the LBP and liquidity issues at ATMs, and the higher volume of cash-outs and harassment or tensions with other ATM users.

WFP COUNTRY STRATEGY

COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (2023-2024)

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Economically-vulnerable and food insecure people in Lebanon, including refugees, meet their basic needs during and in the aftermath of crises.

Focus area: *Crisis response*

Activities: Provide unconditional assistance to crisis-affected people in Lebanon, including refugees

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: Extremely poor and vulnerable people in Lebanon, including children, are more resilient through inclusion in national social safety nets throughout the year.

Focus area: *Resilience building*

Activities: Provide unconditional cash transfers to extremely poor Lebanese through national safety net programmes.
Provide nutritious school meals to Lebanon and refugee children.

Strategic Result 4: Development of sustainable food systems

Strategic Outcome 3: Individuals, households and communities vulnerable to economic and climatic shocks in Lebanon have more resilient livelihoods by 2025.

Focus area: *Resilience building*

Activities: Provide vulnerable Lebanese and refugee communities with integrated resilience and area-based livelihood support through conflict-sensitive and gender transformative approaches.

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 4: National institutions in Lebanon have increased capacity to manage social safety nets and other programmes by 2025.

Focus area: *Resilience building*

Activities: Provide technical expertise, capacity strengthening and policy advice to enhance Government capacity.

Strategic Result 8: Enhanced global partnerships

Strategic Outcome 5: Humanitarian stakeholders benefit from enhanced coordination and mandated services to deliver assistance during, in the aftermath, and in anticipation of crises.

Focus area: *Crisis response*

Activities: Provide sector coordination and mandated services to humanitarian partners.
Provide on-demand services, including resources transfers, to Government and other partners.

Donors

Australia, Austria, Canada, Cyprus, European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon's Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Norway, Poland, Private Donors, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Switzerland, United Kingdom, USA

EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS

At the request of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), WFP and OCHA organised a mission from the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC/FITTEST) team to conduct an assessment of the current telecommunication situation in Lebanon and discuss mitigation measures in case the need arises. Recommendations were presented by both organizations during the HCT meeting that took place in February, and the final report is expected to come out in March.

FOOD SECURITY & AGRICULTURE SECTOR

In 2022, WFP and sector partners reached 2.1 million refugees and Lebanese through cash and food assistance. In addition, more than 36,000 small-scale farmers benefitted from agricultural livelihoods intervention including trainings, provision of inputs, and rehabilitated infrastructure and assets.

ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

In January, WFP issued a news release on Lebanon's first Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report, jointly with FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture. The news release can be accessed [here](#).

WFP led a delegation from the Korean Embassy on a visit to WFP's cooperating partner SHEILD, at their warehouse in Beirut. During the visit, the delegation had the opportunity to see first-hand WFP's in-kind operation and discuss with beneficiaries the support they are receiving.



STORY WORTH TELLING

After moving from Syria in 2013, Amina and her family were living a relatively decent life in Lebanon, not requiring any assistance to meet their needs.

In 2016, Amina's husband was diagnosed with medical conditions that prevented him from keeping stable jobs. The family was no longer able to make ends meet due to his sickness and started receiving WFP's multi-purpose cash (MPC) assistance in that same year.

Amina is able to redeem her MPC assistance at ATMs, money transfer agents, as well as at WFP-contracted shops. "The card definitely helps us to cover different expenses, from rent, water, gas, electricity, and of course food."

Alongside WFP's assistance, Amina started cooking from her home to bring more income into her household and relief some of her stress. "I pour my pain into my cooking. It is my form of stress-relief," she explains.

WFP CASH & IN-KIND ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES AND LEBANESE

JANUARY 2023

